



# The Health of Newcomers: Immigration, Health Policy, and Solidarity For Global Health

*Patricia Illingworth, Wendy E. Parmet*

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Immigration and health care are hotly debated and contentious issues. Policies that relate to both issues—to the health of newcomers—often reflect misimpressions about immigrants, and their impact on health care systems. Despite the fact that immigrants are typically younger and healthier than natives, and that many immigrants play a vital role as care-givers in their new lands, native citizens are often reluctant to extend basic health care to immigrants, choosing instead to let them suffer, to let them die prematurely, or to expedite their return to their home lands. Likewise, many nations turn against immigrants when epidemics such as Ebola strike, under the false belief that native populations can be kept well only if immigrants are kept out.

In *The Health of Newcomers*, Patricia Illingworth and Wendy E. Parmet demonstrate how shortsighted and dangerous it is to craft health policy on the basis of ethnocentrism and xenophobia. Because health is a global public good and people benefit from the health of neighbor and stranger alike, it is in everyone's interest to ensure the health of all. Drawing on rigorous legal and ethical arguments and empirical studies, as well as deeply personal stories of immigrant struggles, Illingworth and Parmet make the compelling case that global phenomena such as poverty, the medical brain drain, organ tourism, and climate change ought to inform the health policy we craft for newcomers and natives alike.

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